



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

USED CAR DEALER INDICTED FOR WITNESS TAMPERING

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a Kansas City, Mo., man was indicted by a federal grand jury today for tampering with a witness in his pending trial for conspiracy to launder the proceeds of illegal cocaine trafficking through his automotive dealership.

Ricardo Antonion Scott, 43, of Kansas City-North, was charged in a three-count superseding indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Kansas City. Today's superseding indictment, Graves explained, replaces an indictment returned on Jan. 12, 2005, by adding an additional charge of witness tampering. **Scott** is the owner of Rick's Auto Sales, 4310 E. 31st St. in Kansas City, Mo.

Count One of the federal indictment alleges that **Scott** participated in a money-laundering conspiracy from Jan. 1, 1999, to Oct. 1, 2002. **Scott** allegedly knew that the money involved in a series of financial transactions was the proceeds of illegal cocaine distribution, and that those financial transactions were designed in part to conceal the source of the proceeds.

According to the indictment, **Scott** took substantial amounts of cash, often in excess of \$10,000, from an unindicted co-conspirator, and purchased automobiles for this person at auto auctions. **Scott** retained the titles to these automobiles, the indictment alleges, in order to conceal the true ownership and source of funds used to purchase them, and to prevent the automobiles from being forfeited by law enforcement in the event of the co-conspirator's arrest. The indictment also alleges that **Scott** rented his dealer license tags to the co-conspirator in a further attempt to conceal the true ownership of the automobiles which he purchased for the co-conspirator. **Scott** also structured his bank deposits from those funds in a manner to avoid filing a cash transaction report, by keeping these deposits under \$10,000 per occasion.

Among at least seven automobiles **Scott** allegedly purchased for the co-conspirator was a 1995 Mercedes for \$33,000 and a 1998 Chevrolet Corvette for \$28,000.

Count Two of the federal indictment alleges that, between Jan. 19 and 25, 2005, **Scott** attempted to persuade a witness to testify falsely in his money laundering trial.

Count Three of the federal indictment is a forfeiture count, which would require **Scott** to forfeit to the government any property involved in the alleged conspiracy, including \$122,075, which is equal to the amount of money involved in the alleged conspiracy, and **Scott's** dealership license from the state of Missouri that authorizes him to purchase and sell automobiles.

Graves cautioned that the charges contained in the indictment are simply accusations, and not evidence of guilt. Evidence supporting the charges must be presented to a federal trial jury, whose duty is to determine guilt or innocence.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Charles E. Ambrose, Jr. It was investigated by the Internal Revenue Service, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at
www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow